

GATHERING

Acknowledgement of Country

Australia

For the Bidjegal Country on which we gather today,

we give thanks.

For the Elders and communities—past, present, and future—who walk these lands,

we pay our respects.

Come freedom and flourishing to land, people, and culture.

Lighting the Christ Candle (點燃基督蠟燭)

God is here!

God is always here!

上帝在这里

上帝永远在这里

God is with us!

God is always with us!

上帝与我们同在，

上帝永远与我们同在

Saying who we are

(KUC 我们的身份宣言)

Our vision is to be a loving and caring community, sharing God's love with the world.

We are a congregation who welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles. We are creating a safe place for the community and sharing the journey of life and faith

Introduction to Theme

Today, Trinity Sunday—the first Sunday in the Season after Pentecost—we celebrate the mystery at the heart of our faith.

The Trinity is not a puzzle to solve but a life we are invited to share—
Breath spoken over chaos, Love meeting us in wounded places,
fellowship that holds both our worship and our doubts. God as Breath,
Word, and Welcome.

Call to Worship

Come, people of God, breathe in the gift of life.

Spirit of God, renew us.

Listen for the Word who speaks creation and compassion.

Christ of God, teach us.

Rest in the embrace that makes us one.

Love of God, gather us, send us.

- **Sing: PH135 / G(II)333 / GC476 / W&R139 God Is One Unique and Holy** (Brian Wren).(Tune: Picardy or Westminster Abbey (TiS 433))

https://youtu.be/aSWUnkcQ-K8?si=kge2EZ3hCR_DUo8B

God is One, unique and holy,

endless dance of love and light,

only source of mind and body,

star-cloud, atom, day and night:

everything that is or could be

tells God's anguish and delight.

God is Oneness-by-Communion:

never distant or alone,

at the heart of all belonging:

**loyal friendship, loving home,
common mind and shared agreement,
common loaf and sung Shalom.**

**Through the pain that loving Wisdom
could foresee, but not forestall,
God is One, though torn and anguished
in the Christ's forsaken call,
One through death and resurrection,
One in Spirit, One for all.**

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#45150**

Opening Prayer

Creator, Christ, and Spirit,
Wind over waters, Word that becomes flesh,
Love that binds us into peace,
move among us now.
Where we are anxious, breathe calm.
Where we are weary, speak courage.
where we are lonely, knit us together.
Make our worship a small echo of your life:
grace received, love shared, hope sent. **Amen.**

Breath prayer

As we gather in the presence of God who creates, speaks, and
welcomes, we pause beside the waters of life and breathe together.

*Guide the breath prayer as described in the embodied practice on p. 15.
Alternatively, you might place the prayer after the scripture reading.*

1. : As we breathe, we remember the breath of God moving over the waters of creation and the waters of baptism. Breathe in: 'Creator...'
2. Slowly guide the prayer:
 - Breath in: Creator...
 - Breathe out: Renew me...Repeat slowly three times.
3. Word and Breath, make us one.

This simple prayer connects breath, water and God's life-giving Spirit. It reminds us that the life of God meets us in ordinary breathing and in the waters that mark us as God's beloved people.

Sing: *Spirit blowing through creation* (Marty Haugen) (video)

https://youtu.be/cR4yfZrNYm0?si=ggxK3EhWmQQ_TZ10

Spirit blowing through creation,
Spirit burning in the skies,
let the hope of your salvation fill our eyes.
God of splendour, God of glory,
you who light the stars above,
all the heavens tell the story of your love.

As you moved upon the waters,
as you ride upon the wind,
move us all, your sons and daughters deep within.
As you shaped the hills and mountains,
formed the land and filled the deep,
let your hand renew and waken all who sleep.

Spirit renewing the earth,
renewing the hearts of all people.
Burn in the weary souls,
blow through the silent lips,
come now, awake us, Spirit of God.

Love that sends the rivers dancing,
love that waters all that lives,
love that heals and holds and rouses and forgives.
You are food for all your creatures,
you are hunger in the soul,
in your hands the broken hearted are made whole.

**All the creatures you have fashioned,
all that live and breathe in you,
find their hope in your compassion, strong and true.
You, O Spirit of salvation,
you alone, beneath, above,
come, renew your whole creation in your love.**

**Spirit renewing the earth,
renewing the hearts of all people.
Burn in the weary souls,
blow through the silent lips,
come now, awake us, Spirit of God.**

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Prayer of Confession

Triune Love, we confess we shrink your wideness,
preferring control over trust,
noise over listening,
separation over fellowship.

Forgive us.

Unclench our hearts, widen our tables,
and return us to your rhythm of creating, healing, and sending.
We hold a moment of silence before God.

Silence is held.

Words of Grace

Hear the good news:
the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit are for you, now.
In Christ, you are forgiven and set free to live as a beloved community.
Thanks be to God.

Sing: Santo! Santo! Santo! Anon. (from Argentina)

<https://youtu.be/Ys6xaPVAmVk?si=S1ruWuAfGgE4bExO>

***Santo, santo, santo.
Mi corazón te adora!
Mi corazón te sabe decir:
Santo eres Señor!
Holy, holy, holy.
My heart, my heart adores you!
My heart knows how to say to you:
Holy are you, Lord.***

Pass the peace

ENGAGING THE WORD

Readings from the Hebrew Scriptures

Genesis 1:1—2:4a

1In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

³Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And

God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” ²⁷So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. ²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

²⁹God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them

for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.

³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

²Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. ²And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

⁴These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,

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The Heavens and the Earth

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

Light

³Then God said, “Let there be light”;

Sky

⁶And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.”

Land

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.”

Vegetation

¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation:

Day and Night – the Seasons

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years

¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars.

Living Creatures

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.”

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind:

Humankind

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness;

³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

Psalm 8

¹O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

²Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.

³When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;

⁴what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

⁵Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honour.

⁶You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet,

⁷all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,

⁸the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

⁹O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

- **Sing: Iona (Common Ground) God to enfold you** (John Bell)
(Sing 2x)
- https://youtu.be/MLwVGNkMDwQ?si=Jk_SpCy-zu9F_Z2f
**God to enfold you,
Christ to uphold you,
Spirit to keep you in heaven's sight.
So may God grace you,
heal and embrace you,
lead you through darkness into the light.**

Readings from the Christian Scriptures

2 Corinthians 13:11–13

¹¹Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹²Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. ¹³The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

Matthew 28:16–20

¹⁶Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Offering

Creator of abundance,

receive these gifts,

signs of gratitude, hope, and solidarity,

and weave them into good news for neighbours and creation

Sing: Join us in this doxology (word of praise) by Ruth C. Duck. (Tune: Praise God from whom all blessings flow)

https://youtu.be/BhWxfI8I_s?si=qRyvo4nnBN8f_gYJ

Praise God, the Source of life and birth.

Praise God, the Word, who came to earth.

Praise God, the Spirit, holy flame.

All glory, honour to God's name! Amen.

Reflection:

Trinity Sunday is a hard one to figure out. Any sermon that tries to explain the Trinity will likely end up as interesting as the proverbial watching paint dry. But we try, and try desperately, with various and sundry descriptions, illustrations, and props. Why? Do we really think that any of these efforts could possibly summarize what is already a human attempt to grasp the nature of God? This is our inclination, our instinct, however — to domesticate wonder, to clarify awe, to tame transcendence.

So, taking a cue from Matthew might be the necessary perspective for how we preach on this Trinity Sunday. Note that the Trinity isn't mentioned in a universal sense or evoked in some general, non-descript circumstance. Jesus does not define or describe the Trinity. Rather, Jesus articulates "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" for the sake of spreading the good news of God's presence and imagining God's kingdom here and now. Making disciples and baptizing does not require a formula or doctrine but only the needed words so as to witness to Emmanuel in the world. As such, "I am with you always" is a summary of the Trinity itself.

I think this might matter for how we preach a confession of the church that could easily be dismissed by most, not because they don't care, but because we can't seem to make it relevant. We might respond by insisting that not everything about faith can be relevant. That there are some things we just have to accept on faith. But that does not always work in a world that daily challenges our understanding of it; that daily makes less and less sense; that daily demands response in ways that make a difference.

The Trinity asserts God with us. The Trinity affirms God's presence. The Trinity avows that no matter what and in whatever circumstances God will be there.

Paul knew this. Paul's last proclamation for the Corinthians is simply the promise of God's ongoing presence in and for the sake of the Corinthian community. "I didn't need to understand the hypostatic unity of the Trinity; I just needed to turn my life over to whoever came up with redwood trees." Anne Lamott's quote might very well suffice as a paraphrase of Paul's benedictory words.

This promise means a certain kind of behaviour from us. What will we do, what will we say if we truly believe "I am with you always"? Making disciples and baptizing are not just apostolic acts or evangelical events. They are ways by which the Kingdom of Heaven happens, because happenstance is not how the Kingdom works. If we claim "I am with you always" as true, that should make a significant difference as to how we are in the world.

How will we be with each other if we believe God is here? How will we act toward each other if we believe God is with us? How will we speak about each other if we believe God is among us? And for that matter, with the Genesis and Psalm texts in mind, how will we care for God's creation if we believe God is beside us in the garden? How will we tend to this earth that has been entrusted

to us if we believe we can feel God's tears as God watches our apathy for the earth?

We are living in a time when decisions and actions and speech demonstrate indifference to God's presence, even a disbelief that God is in the midst of all that we do. Much more is at stake with the assertion of "I am with you always" than "What Would Jesus Do?" What we do is no mere imitation of Jesus' actions but comes with the recognition that Jesus' actions were premised upon God's presence and brought about God's presence.

We might ask, therefore, what would our ministry look like, our lives look like, our way of being look like, our congregations look like if what we did and said began with, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." A Trinitarian invocation might make us pause and question if what we are about to do is truly in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. The experience might be completely different if there is an expectation that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit are actually in the room. Or, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" might give us the strength, the power to risk, to take a chance on an action, knowing that God promises to be there.

If we were to grant that, "I am with you always" is a summary of the Trinity itself, then maybe the Trinity would not be an irrelevant belief of the church but *the* belief about God without which the church could not be the church.

Karoline

About the Author



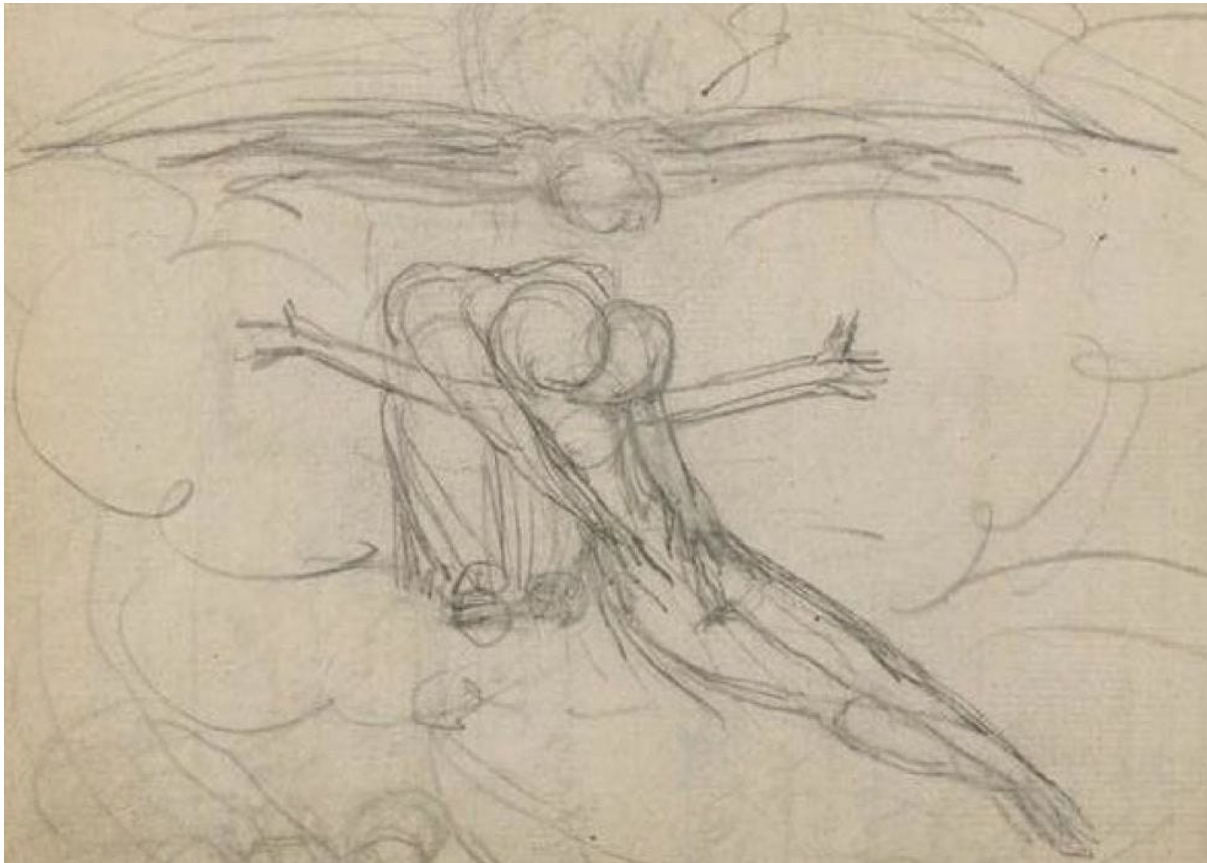
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Sketch of the Trinity, William Blake

Genesis 1:1-2:4a | Psalm 8 | 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 | Matthew 28:16-20

The readings for the Sunday of the Holy Trinity were not assigned to convince us once and for all of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity but because they give witness the mystery of God. The reading from Matthew includes the trinitarian formula, 2 Corinthians mentions the three persons of the Trinity, and the first

creation account uses the divine plural in the creation of humanity, “Let us make humans in our image ...” (1:26)

The passage from Matthew is known as the Great Commission. Matthew ends his gospel not with his own words but with the authoritative words of Jesus. Verses 18 to 20 form a cohesive unit. Verses 16 and 17 serve as their introduction.

I grew up in the church and thinking back to my youth I remember this passage only as the passage of the Great Commission. As such it was authoritative, so much so that we missed its introduction.

The eleven had followed the command of Jesus to come to Galilee (28:7) and this is the first encounter between Jesus and the eleven following the resurrection. Matthew tells us that “When they saw [Jesus], they worshipped him; but some doubted.”

In the greater context of the gospels this is not entirely surprising as the disciples often meet Jesus with fear rather than joy. In Luke the disciples assume Jesus to be a ghost (24:37) while the doubt of Thomas (John 20) has become proverbial.

On a day such as Trinity Sunday it would be easy to reduce doubt to an intellectual problem that then would require an intellectual solution, yet that is not what is going on here. It is good for us to remember what the disciples had lived through. Their whole world was turned on its head for the three years they followed Jesus. Suddenly at the crucifixion everything they had come to believe about Jesus seemed nullified, and now they are back to what had taken them three long years to start to live into.

But not only did they have to again come to terms with the fact that God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; that God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; that God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are (1 Cor 1), they also had to understand that the cross is God’s means of salvation.

Ulrich Luz writes that for Matthew the faith of the disciples is not a certainty beyond all doubt but that their faith lives in the space between trust and discouragement, between certainty and doubt. Little faith is not suddenly overcome and left behind but continues to be the reality in which the disciples live.^[2]

And not having certainty can be a good thing, for certainty can make us complacent.

And complacency may be the problem of the West's last 50 years. We took democracy for granted and thought that our standard of living and our conveniences could only ever increase. But now that things don't look as rosy as we had hoped and we worry about the future, complacency is no longer an option.

Frederick Buechner famously said "Doubts are the ants in the pants of faith. They keep it awake and moving."

And this brings us back to the question of whether the doubt of the disciples applies to all of the eleven or just to some of them. If Buechner is right, and I think that he is, then I prefer the idea of all disciples worshipping *and* doubting, for their doubt keeps them engaged in love toward the world and in the work of the Kingdom. It is those worshipping and doubting disciples that Jesus commissions.

- **Sing: TiS 418 She sits like a bird brooding on the waters** (John Bell) https://youtu.be/9iYgOWT1AKA?si=fa1_osqmDPb0g0FP

**She sits like a bird, brooding on the waters,
hovering on the chaos of the world's first day;
she sighs and she sings, mothering creation,
waiting to give birth to all the Word will say.**

**She wings over earth, resting where she wishes,
lighting close at hand or soaring through the skies;
she nests in the womb, welcoming each wonder,
nourishing potential hidden to our eyes.**

**She dances in fire, startling her spectators,
waking tongues of ecstasy where dumbness reigned;
she weans and inspires all whose hearts are open,
nor can she be captured, silenced or restrained.**

**For she is the Spirit, one with God in essence,
gifted by the Saviour in eternal love;
she is the key opening the scriptures,
enemy of apathy and heavenly dove.**

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Announcements

Prayers for Others

**Triune God, for those short on breath, through illness, grief, or fear,
*breathe peace.***

**For places where words wound,
bring truth and healing.**

**For communities frayed,
*restore fellowship with justice and tenderness.***

**For this Biddigal Country, our shared home,
*teach us faithful stewardship;***

for leaders, humility;

for the Church, hospitality.

Hold those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts...

(Names may be spoken.)

(Silence is held.)

Gather us again in your love. Amen.

Abba Prayer

Eternal Spirit

Source of all that is and ever shall be, Loving Parent in whom we discern heaven,

May knowledge of your holiness inspire all peoples.

And may your commonwealth of peace and freedom

flourish on earth, until all of humankind

heed your call to justice and compassion.

May we find the bread that we need for today.

And for the hurts we cause one another may we be forgiven as we forgive them theirs.

In times of trial and temptation, help us to be strong;

When life seems overwhelming, help us to endure;

And thus from the yoke of sin deliver us.

**May you reign in the power of human love, Now and forever. Amen
(Tom Hall)**

SENDING OUT

**Sing: *Womb of Life and source of being* (Ruth Duck)(8.7 8.7D)
(Austria?)**

**Womb of life, and source of being, .
home of ev'ry restless heart,
in your arms the world's awakened;
you have loved us from the start.**

**We, your children, gather 'round you,
at the table you prepare.**

**Sharing stories tears and laughter,
we are nurtured by your care.**

**Word in flesh, our brother Jesus,
born to bring us second birth,
you have come to stand beside us,
knowing weakness, knowing earth.**

**Priest who shares our human struggles,
Life of Life, and Death of Death,
risen Christ, come stand among us,
send the Spirit by your breath.**

**Brooding Spirit, move among us;
be our partner, be our friend.
When our mem'ry fails, remind us
whose we are, what we intend.
Labor with us, aid the birthing
of the new world made new,
ever singing, ever praising, one with all,
and one with you.**

**Mother, Brother, holy Partner;
Father, Spirit, Only Son:
we would praise your name forever,
one-in-three, and three-in-one.
We would share your life, your passion,
share your word of world made anew,
ever singing, ever praising,
one with all, and one with you.**

Blessing/Benediction

**May the grace of Christ meet you in every need,
the love of God steady your heart,
and the fellowship of the Spirit gather and send you,
today and always.**

Name and send

As we go from this place, you are invited to take part in the embodied practice 'Name and send' on page 16.

In pairs, bless one another with the words: 'Go in the grace, love, and fellowship of God.'

Exit Song: • *Go to the World!* (Words: Sylvia Dunstan. Tune *Sine nomine + alleluia*)

<https://youtu.be/fmQDeSWdFrQ?si=el9rZdkzWhZLnkhH>

Go to the world! Go into all the earth;

Go preach the cross where Christ renews life's worth,

Baptizing as the sign of our rebirth. Alleluia.

Go to the world! Go into every place;

Go live the word of God's redeeming grace;

Go seek God's presence in each time and space. Alleluia.

Go to the world! Go struggle, bless, and pray;

The nights of tears give way to joyful day.

As servant Church, you follow Christ's own way. Alleluia.

Go to the World! Go as the ones I send,

For I am with you till the age shall end,

When all the host of glory cry, "Amen." Alleluia